United Nations E/2016/SR.20

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
13 June 2016

Original: English

2016 session
24 July 2015-27 July 2016
Integration segment

Summary record of the 20th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 2 May 2016, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. Shava (Vice-President) ..... (Zimbabwe)
Later: Mr. Jürgenson (Vice-President) ..... (Estonia)

Contents

Agenda item 8: Integration segment (*continued*)

Panel discussion: "Towards a paradigm shift in development"

General debate

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent as soon as possible to the Chief of the Documents Control Unit (srcorrections@un.org).

Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org/).

16-07221 (E)

Please recycle

In the absence of Mr. Oh Joon (Republic of Korea), Mr. Shava (Zimbabwe), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 8: Integration segment (*continued*)

Panel discussion: "Towards a paradigm shift in development"

1. **Mr. Shank** (Head of Communications, United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network and Adjunct Professor, New York University School of Professional Studies' Center for Global Affairs), moderator, said that it was necessary to think about using a conversational and colloquial style to engage the public and civil society on their own terms, especially with regard to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In addition, the international community should pivot off of the news cycle to make the Sustainable Development Goals more relevant to daily life. The United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network was active in various American cities, including Baltimore, Detroit and San Jose, by aligning city objectives with the Sustainable Development Goals and ensuring that localization happened from the ground up, rather than the top down.

2. Regarding coordination, although certain climate advocates had lamented that only a handful of the Sustainable Development Goals were related to climate change, in fact they all contained important climate components. Further connections were needed, however, with the 2030 Agenda and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in order to ensure financial and organizational efficiency across the Sustainable Development Goals. Crowdsourcing would be helpful to engage constituents and civil society in offering sustainable development solutions.

3. The international community did not yet appear to be truly comfortable with breaking down silos and must be willing to shift paradigms around innovative approaches and technological change, assessing the effects on business and policy-making communities.

4. **Mr. Zamora Rivas** (Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations), panellist, said that within the United Nations system, there had been several substantial changes that were transcendent for the future of humanity. Initially, the development of the social sciences had produced academic factionalism, but the economic, social and environmental pillars were an interconnected basis for change that superseded it. Traditional working methods at the United Nations involved forming a group of experts, chaired by two co-chairs (one from a developing country and one from a developed country) whose discussions, fostered by input from experts and Member States, led to proposals that were ultimately approved as documents in the General Assembly. However, the people were excluded from such working methods; a paradigm shift should move from the bottom up, seeking to take all people into account. Governments were increasingly consulting all sectors of society to determine global policies. In his country, for example, the policies for public safety and peaceful coexistence had been developed through public consultation, which provided recommendations that were later implemented by the President of El Salvador.

5. The United Nations was gradually moving away from its purely declarative function, using beautiful but generic language to make sweeping proposals, and was instead moving closer to the reality of ordinary people in its documents and processes. With regard to sustainable development, indicators were being developed to determine if Member States were truly accomplishing the concrete commitments they had made. The commitments contained in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement marked huge steps forward in the development of global governance, though gaps remained to be addressed. In particular, a political dimension was necessary to address economic, social and environmental issues, as politics were a tool used to distribute power. While it was impossible to establish a single political framework, it was necessary to incorporate political commitments in all the processes required for the achievement of economic, social and environmental objectives.

6. **Mr. Nabarro** (Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development), panellist, said that the 2030 Agenda was a political manifesto for the future of the world's population as well as the planet itself. It provided directives to ensure equitable prosperity and peace through partnerships and policies. The transformative, integrated and indivisible agenda required innovation, which was occurring in different ways, including through interconnected thinking; the use of mobile technology; cross-sectoral work; synergy across multiple stakeholders; multi-stakeholder arrangements

in social movements; public empowerment to hold representatives accountable; increasing disaggregation of progress data by gender and social group; innovative financing that attached all resources to different dimensions of the 2030 Agenda; a shift away from restrictive governance to empowering governance that began to heal society's wounds; and a new vision of how the international community saw itself. Sustainable development was not a finite and enclosed task, but one without end, where the world's role was to renew, refine and restore.

7. **Ms.** Minh-Thu **Pham** (Executive Director for Policy, United Nations Foundation), panellist, said that integration was the main shift that had occurred: conceptually, the international community had accepted that it must break down the silos between issues, between levels of governance, and between work sectors. It was clear from the various agreements signed in 2015 that climate and development could not be separated. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, ending poverty and ensuring economic growth all required taking appropriate action on climate. The Paris Agreement and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda emphasized a universal and inclusive approach, giving a role to civil society, the private sector, developing countries, developed countries, multilateral development banks and other partners in implementation. That marked a shift with regard to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), where developing countries had primarily been responsible for delivery. Finally, the shift towards leaving no one behind would ensure that questions of inequality were tackled.

8. Now that a conceptual agreement had been reached, the challenge was putting it into action. What had been successful in the past when translating broad, global goals into national goals were the promotion of ownership, the implementation of evidence-based policies, and the adoption of a bottom-up approach to convert the ambitious 2030 Agenda into specific national programme strategies and budgets.

9. Moving from conceptual understanding to the well-coordinated implementation of the right programmes and policies was a challenge, however. Coordination was one means of ensuring integration but was not always possible. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals and their 169 targets could be overwhelming for Governments trying to figure out where to start. It was necessary to look at evidence to determine where progress on one Goal could have causal and correlative impacts on other Goals. All actors must be engaged, including civil society and the private sector. The objective must be reaching the poorest and the most vulnerable first.

10. In terms of solutions, it was necessary to instil ownership by broadly communicating the Goals and connecting with multiple partners. The global review process at the high-level political forum on sustainable development would be important for promoting accountability. Partnerships should include as many stakeholders as possible in order to engage in creative problem-solving and draw on the best from different sectors, while reaping the benefits of new technologies. In addition, it was necessary to mobilize research institutions to produce evidence on what strategies were successful. While many research institutions in developing countries had amassed such evidence in their own countries, they must be brought into the United Nations system. Pilot programmes had been launched by the United Nations to help identify successful pathways. In general, the United Nations system must be supported in order to provide Governments with sufficient resources. Capacity should be built to collect and analyse data, especially disaggregated data. The United Nations Foundation was proud to host the new Global Partnership for Sustainable Data. Lastly, nothing could be accomplished without obtaining political support for increased financing, policy support, and the promotion of ownership.

11. **Mr. Shank** (Head of Communications, United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network and Adjunct Professor, New York University School of Professional Studies' Centre for Global Affairs), said that reporters wanted to hear evidence of success, rather than timelines and targets. Storytelling should be used to inform the press of what was happening in real time. Social media could be used to translate the esoteric nature of the Sustainable Development Goals into reality for the public.

12. **Mr. Deichmann** (Chief Economist and Co-Director of the *World Development Report 2016* of the World Bank), panellist, discussing the *World Development Report 2016: Digital Dividends*, said that it was commonly believed that new technologies would have a major impact on the achievement of development objectives, in particular with regard to implementing and monitoring projects. The report looked at agriculture, environment and smart cities, inter alia, with a view to communicating the major

efforts of policy analysis to a general audience. As with cinema, three things were necessary to tell a good story: a compelling narrative, many interesting details, and a useful moral.

13. Applying that to the report, few development stories currently unfolding were more compelling than the changes being wrought by new technologies in developing countries and illustrating the fundamental human desire to communicate. While the private benefits of technology were obvious, it was important to determine the value of such technologies for development more broadly.

14. The report also contained many interesting details about how the Internet and mobile technology were influencing development and addressed whether digital technologies were making firms more productive, providing more jobs and greater societal integration for people, and making Governments more efficient in terms of service delivery. There was evidence that digital technologies did provide more growth, more jobs, and better services. Digital technologies allowed work to be completed more quickly, more efficiently and often for less money. New technologies also reduced transaction costs, thus improving inclusion and reducing information asymmetry. Transaction costs near zero had allowed vast-scale enterprises such as online retailers to emerge, but there could also be socially relevant benefits to big data.

15. However, the benefits of new technologies had not reached everyone equally. Economists wondered why productivity growth had significantly declined despite the introduction of new technologies. With regard to the debate on inequality, new technologies had partially contributed to the hollowing out and polarization of labour markets; it should be determined whether they also contributed to rising inequality. Some governance indicators that had been expected to improve had instead worsened, such as the share of free and fair elections. Although there was great potential for the Internet to improve democracy and make the world a more inclusive place, for every country like Estonia that had successfully implement an e-governance system of service delivery, there were five other countries that had failed in that regard.

16. In order for digital technologies to have a major beneficial impact, analogue complements must be in place. Economically speaking, without a competitive business environment, there was often not enough investment in new technologies, especially in developing countries. A new education agenda should focus on teaching the right kind of skills that would not become outdated or replaced by the new technologies. Technology could only be effective for service delivery if Governments were willing and accountable. In the absence of analogue complements — good regulation of the business environment, skills training and accountability — the development impact of new technologies would often remain disappointing. With a strong analogue foundation, however, ample digital dividends could be harvested: faster growth, more jobs and better services.

17. **Ms. Iskenderian** (President and Chief Executive Officer, Women's World Banking), panellist, said that Women's World Banking had focused on empowering women through access to financial tools and services for over 35 years. Although Sustainable Development Goal 5 was the only Goal with a specific focus on gender, the issue of gender was in fact cross-cutting. Women felt more acutely many of the inequalities highlighted by the Sustainable Development Goals, including in health care, food security and poverty.

18. Financial inclusion was another cross-cutting issue that could greatly impact the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. According to the Global Findex financial inclusion database, in 2015, 700 million more people had gained access to formal bank accounts (compared to 2012); much of the increased access was driven by technological progress. India, for example, had benefited from the introduction of a unique biometric identification system and accounted for 370 million of those bank account holders.

19. Despite such exciting progress, however, the difference between men and women's access to finance had not changed at all. The financial gender gap remained at 9 per cent in developing countries and 7 per cent globally. The gap reached 28 per cent for women earning less than $2 a day. The persistent gender gap with regard to financial access was driven by a number of structural barriers that would require broad-based innovation to be dismantled.

20. Women controlled fewer assets, were much less likely to be employed, and if employed, were more likely to work in the informal sector. In addition, they faced legal and cultural limitations to financial independence, and were sometimes banned from land ownership or inheritance. A number of financial

technology solutions seemed promising with regard to providing alternative methods of credit scoring and loan repayment estimation. Moreover, women were harder to reach, often owing to their domestic responsibilities, cultural restrictions and the likelihood of residing in rural areas. Digital finance could be a powerful tool to bring financial services to women. Unfortunately, over 1.7 billion women did not own mobile phones; in general, women were 14 per cent less likely to own a phone in their own name than men.

21. Banks were less understood by women. Although many women aspired to have bank accounts, they simultaneously felt unwelcome in banks. To increase financial literacy, which was quite low for women in general, her organization had developed a soap opera in the Dominican Republic that included financial messages in its plot lines. After the first 18-week season of the soap opera had aired, there had been a 39 per cent increase in savings accounts opened by women.

22. Women were likewise poorly understood by banks. Because women in developing countries had less access to formal identification, they were far less likely to be able to satisfy the strict documentation requirements imposed by banks and regulators.

23. **Mr. Shank** (Head of Communications, United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network and Adjunct Professor, New York University School of Professional Studies' Centre for Global Affairs), asked the panellists to give an example of breaking down silos that they had witnessed, as well as one that they wished to see. The climate community must understand its relevance and engage with all sectors, connecting the Goals and effectively communicating them to the public.

24. **Mr. Deichmann** (Chief Economist and Co-Director of the *World Development Report 2016* of the World Bank), said that the report contained a case study on a rural development project in India with over one million beneficiaries. The project had involved villages intensively in research, data collection and monitoring, looking at economic and social issues, the implications of the caste system and the impact of climate change. Villagers had proposed survey questions that might have otherwise been overlooked by researchers, especially with regard to women's empowerment. Although technology played an important part in the project, the more exciting element was the leadership role played by villagers in developing questionnaires and collecting and analysing data.

25. By themselves, new technologies would not overcome long-standing development problems. It was therefore necessary to consider how technology fit into the broader development context and to focus on its analogue components.

26. **Mr. Zamora Rivas** (Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations) expressed the belief that it was by involving all different kinds of individuals in the conversation that the world would be able to eradicate poverty.

27. **Mr. Shank** (Head of Communications, United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network and Adjunct Professor, New York University School of Professional Studies' Centre for Global Affairs), said that the conversation regarding sustainable development often had to start at the local level with smaller objectives before it could address the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda.

28. **Ms.** Minh-Thu **Pham** (Executive Director for Policy, United Nations Foundation) said that developed countries that had traditionally been donors were now forced to examine their own data capacities to determine how to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals into national plans and programmes. As what was decided at the United Nations level was often seen as the responsibility of developing countries, it was quite a paradigm shift to see donor countries making changes to implement the Goals. Even small, homogenous and wealthy donor countries did not automatically meet the objectives of the 2030 Agenda or possess sufficient data capacity. She wondered how that shift would translate over time into interactions with development partners in developing countries.

29. She hoped that one day, all citizens in the world could go onto their mobile phone and see how their community was performing with regard to various development goals and provide relevant input. While such a broad platform was unlikely to be realized by 2030, the long-term ambition was to create a global review to ensure accountability at highly localized levels.

30. **Ms. Iskenderian** (President and Chief Executive Officer, Women's World Banking), elaborating upon the difficulties women often faced in meeting the identification requirements for bank accounts, said that four years earlier, the Central Bank of Nigeria had recognized that the country's financial system was

riskier and less stable because 70 per cent of its population was operating outside of the formal financial system. The Bank had then shifted its procedure from requiring extensive documentation and answers to over 50 questions to allowing bank accounts to be opened with simply a photograph on a cell phone, a name and an address. That had allowed many individuals, primarily women who worked in open-air markets, to open savings accounts, thus shifting the banking paradigm in Nigeria.

31. While better and gender-disaggregated data would be useful, it was frustrating to observe that although the existing data indicated that women were better savers, more loyal customers of financial institutions, bought more insurance and were better at repaying loans, they still had unequal access to finance. It was necessary to move past unconscious biases and shift the paradigm with regard to women's financial access.

32. **Ms. Vaz** (Research Officer, Oxford Department of International Development, University of Oxford), said that, as some of the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals referred to national objectives, it was difficult to establish comparisons. For instance, target 1.2 aimed to reduce poverty by 50 per cent according to national definitions. As national definitions would naturally vary, she wondered how the importance of context specificity should be balanced with the need to make comparisons across countries and projects.

33. **Mr. Deichmann** (Chief Economist and Co-Director of the *World Development Report 2016* of the World Bank), said that local initiatives that did not always have external validity were not mutually exclusive with global objectives. While too much time was currently spent on determining whether initiatives were aligned with the goals of national statistics offices and other large institutions, research should not go too far in the opposite direction, allowing local villages to make all the choices. It was perhaps the beginning of a new phase with regard to developing multi-dimensional poverty indicators that went beyond income and consumption.

34. **Ms.** Minh-Thu **Pham** (Executive Director for Policy, United Nations Foundation) said that it was always important to remember the reasons for a specific analysis or project. Comparing across countries would only be important in certain cases, while it was always important to look at progress within countries. Context-specific work should be emphasized if it was driving progress nationally.

35. **Mr. Zamora Rivas** (Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations) said that a landmark study conducted by the Institution of Nutrition of Central America and Panama on the nutrition of Central American farmers had allegedly discovered that the vast majority of farmers should have been dead as they did not obtain the minimum nutritional standards. However, the study had overlooked the nutritional contributions of the sun and mangoes, which grew abundantly in the country and were not a purchased foodstuff. The flawed study illustrated the problem of trying to measure everything with one indicator. A similar problem was faced by middle-income countries, which were measured by a single indicator and lumped together despite significant differences. It was necessary to determine a more useful indicator.

36. **Mr. Shank** (Head of Communications, United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network and Adjunct Professor, New York University School of Professional Studies' Centre for Global Affairs), said that revising gross domestic product (GDP) as the sole indicator of middle-income status would be a great step towards measuring progress.

37. The ONE NYC programme showed how many agencies could be integrated into a broad city-wide sustainability effort tackling a variety of issues such as affordable housing, climate and inequality.

38. Breaking down of silos had not yet been witnessed with regard to funding, which would be necessary in order to create synergies.

39. **Mr. Williams** (Director and United Nations Representative, World Vision International) said that his dream would be that four years hence, every corporation that accessed capital markets would be publicly judged for its performance with regard to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

40. **Mr. Zamora Rivas** (Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations) said that the United Nations system resembled a feudal society, with each agency director acting like a feudal lord and fighting for prerogatives and funding. While telling the whole world to shift paradigms, internally the United Nations was very reluctant to change.

41. **Ms.** Minh-Thu **Pham** (Executive Director for Policy, United Nations Foundation) said that the international community should think in terms of funding outcomes and a longer-term vision, rather than specific institutions or programmes.

42. **Mr. Shank** (Head of Communications, United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network and Adjunct Professor, New York University School of Professional Studies' Centre for Global Affairs), said that the Sustainable Development Goals should be made immediately relevant. There were many daily opportunities for breaking down silos and shifting paradigms.

43. *Mr. Jürgenson (Estonia), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

General debate

44. **Mr. Chandrtri** (Observer for Thailand), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that policy integration was central to achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, making the integration segment particularly important as a platform for sharing experiences and making recommendations. Owing to its transformative and universal nature, the 2030 Agenda represented a paradigm shift, and an innovative and integrated approach would be needed to make meaningful progress in the three dimensions of sustainable development. The Group was therefore very disappointed that a discussion on national experiences in policymaking had not formed part of the segment.

45. Policy integration should aim at mutually beneficial outcomes in the economic, environmental and social spheres, and success in those areas went far beyond measurable economic growth. Implementation was a long-term process aimed at improving living conditions for current and future generations. Rather than simply focusing on a monetary cost-benefit analysis, methodologies should also strive for a more people-centred, balanced approach to policy integration to encourage greater resilience to external shocks. Sustainability should be given full consideration in order to preserve the environment for future generations.

46. The main challenge facing policy integration was that a "business-as-usual" approach would not work. National implementation of the 2030 Agenda would be severely tested by the need to strike a balance between the public and private sectors. Silos in traditional policymaking needed to be broken down and supportive institutional frameworks created. Developing countries, especially countries in special situations, would need assistance from the United Nations to overcome policy integration challenges. Given that it would be a long-term process, institutional and functional capacity-building programmes should also follow a sustained, long-term and demand-driven pattern. The role of the United Nations should include, upon request, technology transfer and technological guidance, facilitating best practice exchanges, and fostering proactive collaboration on cross-sectoral institutional policy frameworks. The Group urged development partners to place more emphasis on those areas.

47. Implementation at the national level would require a transformation that took account of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, as well as a favourable economic environment. Efforts should be made to improve global economic governance and support the equal participation of developing countries. Macroeconomic policies should also support an enabling environment for sustainable development. The implementation of innovation policies, meanwhile, would require an environment that supported information and communications technology and the expansion of capacity-building and technology transfer in developing countries.

48. The Group attached great value to innovative policy solutions based on culture and traditional knowledge and practices. It had a great deal of best practices and traditional knowledge to draw on, which could be offered as alternative development models and strategies. It also supported the rising trend of South-South and triangular cooperation, which fostered the sharing of best practices among the countries of the South, while also keeping in mind that those endeavours were complementary to and not a substitute for the main channel of cooperation between the developed North and the South.

49. Lastly, policy innovation and integration would also require better coordination and less duplication at the global level. The Council and the General Assembly should therefore work in a more coordinated and coherent manner. The Group called upon all participants and stakeholders to step up their efforts to create a more prosperous, just and environmentally friendly world that left no one behind.

50. **Mr. Dang** Huy Dong (Viet Nam), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that 2016 marked the launch of the ASEAN Community and the start of implementation of the 2030 Agenda by ASEAN, building on its overall success in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

51. Policy integration was central to both endeavours. ASEAN stressed the importance of horizontal and vertical integration, which had resulted in enhanced institutional capacity, greater effectiveness and efficiency, a stronger secretariat and greater institutional presence. In its experience, regional policy integration involved effective goal setting, policy design, implementation and evaluation based on strong leadership and a shared vision. ASEAN had formulated a number of joint initiatives in cross-border education, which had led to concrete, measurable results thanks to strong coordination.

52. With the aim of integrating the 2030 Agenda into ASEAN regional planning, a five-year plan of action (2016-2020) to implement the Joint Declaration on Comprehensive Partnership between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the United Nations had been agreed in December 2015.

53. Regional cooperation was essential to tackling many development problems, such as climate change. Yet regional policy integration posed a huge challenge owing to differing levels of development and needs. Both at the national and regional levels, obstacles included fragmentation, silos and a lack of innovative capacity and resources. Countries were working individually and together to address those challenges.

54. **Mr. Al-Musawi** (Iraq) said that the Sustainable Development Goals had been adopted in a new, innovative and unique spirit, namely, that no one would be left behind, sending a clear message that the Agenda applied to everyone, regardless of political, social, economic and cultural differences. The 17 Goals could be achieved only if everyone worked together. Implementation of the 2030 Agenda would require an integrated, innovative approach on three levels: vision, implementation and evaluation.

55. The Agenda was the product of a very ambitious, integrated vision that aimed to transform the world by freeing it from poverty, hunger, disease and need, where all life could prosper and was free of fear, and where everyone knew how to read and write. The main objective had been to draw up an Agenda that was in the interests of the people and the planet, and to make peace and prosperity a reality, in line with the preamble of General Assembly resolution 70/1 (2015).

56. Regarding implementation, an approach to breaking down silos might call for new implementation methodologies. However, any new methodology must take advantage of the interrelatedness of the goals and create synergies. Resources assigned to achieving Goal 1 (eradication of poverty), for example, would also have an impact on Goal 2 (eradication of hunger). Such interrelationships should be exploited.

57. Challenges could arise from breaking down silos and an innovative, integrated approach would be needed, which would involve the innovative management of the available human and material resources. Who, how and when were very important questions at every stage of implementation, to avoid wasting resources. Optimal use of resources was the indicator of success.

58. Concerning evaluation, while the 17 Goals were interrelated and integrated, they were also comprehensive and universal in nature, and not directed at a single region or segment of society. They applied to everyone, which should be taken into account during their implementation and evaluation. Goal 4, for example, involved providing every community with good-quality education, while taking into account its specific characteristics. A one-size-fits-all approach would not work.

59. **Ms. Bajgarova** (Czech Republic) said that a number of important international agreements had been concluded in 2015, making it the year of multilateral diplomacy. Among all the instruments adopted, however, the 2030 Agenda occupied a very special position: it was a holistic plan that involved everything and everyone. The time had come to translate those agreements into day-to-day business and deliver on the pledges made.

60. The Economic and Social Council and its integration segment were a crucial platform for implementing the 2030 Agenda, given that the Council served as a link between different bodies and its mandate was to integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development within the United Nations system and beyond.

61. The key to success lay in three areas. First, the Sustainable Development Goals were fundamentally different to the Millennium Development Goals and the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and far more complex, which would require a change of mindset. Second, mainstreaming the Goals within the existing structures would be far more relevant than creating new institutions and bodies. Third, maintaining policy coherence would present a challenge, but long-term prosperity outweighed short-term benefits.

62. Although the 15-year period established for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals appeared to provide ample time, work must begin immediately. Countries already had the necessary resources at their disposal; all that was required was to use them well.

63. **Ms. Hua** Ye (China) said that the 2030 Agenda had established a blueprint for international development cooperation. It was now up to the international community to translate commitment into action and fully launch the implementation process on the basis of win-win cooperation.

64. Each country had full sovereignty over its development and its implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and had the right to formulate an appropriate development strategy that was in line with the international development agenda.

65. Poverty eradication should remain the top priority, as it affected basic survival and increased the capacity for development. Implementation of sustainable development and coordination of its economic, social and environmental spheres should be guided by the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities and respect for national conditions and capabilities. In addition, development partnerships should be optimized and developed countries should fulfil their official development assistance commitments without delay. While North-South cooperation should remain the main channel, South-South and triangular cooperation should be strengthened, and the participation of the private sector and other stakeholders should be scaled up.

66. It was important to finalize the coordination mechanism for development. Development policy should be incorporated into global macroeconomic policy, to increase the voice and representation of developing countries. The United Nations development system and its specialized agencies, funds and programmes should enhance development resources and use their own advantages to facilitate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and advance international development cooperation in line with their mandates.

67. With regard to follow-up of the global implementation process, the high-level political forum on sustainable development should play a key role, and progress towards commitments on development financing, technology transfer and capacity-building should be comprehensively reviewed. At the national level, assessment should allow for policy flexibility, to enable experiences to be shared in a constructive manner.

68. China had already made progress in implementing the 2030 Agenda and had incorporated it into its Thirteenth Five-Year Plan and into its national mid- to long-term development strategies. In addition, it had established an intersectoral coordination mechanism for implementation composed of 43 government institutions.

69. The Government was committed to facilitating international development cooperation, including South-South cooperation. As President of the Group of 20 for 2016, China would make the 2030 Agenda a priority, aiming to facilitate better cooperation within the Group and to take the lead in implementing the Agenda.

70. **Mr. Abbas** (Lebanon) said that the Government of Lebanon had begun drafting a national sustainable development plan in 2014, and was now aligning it with the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

71. The plan covered public services and the main economic sectors in Lebanon, and each chapter took stock of existing programmes, analysed their shortcomings and presented alternatives where appropriate. One chapter would be dedicated to data collection and analysis, particularly ways in which the national statistical office could be strengthened. The final section of the plan would include draft legislation for implementing each of the reforms. The plan would cover all 17 Sustainable Development Goals, but those that were more urgent for Lebanon would receive greater attention.

72. The plan would be financed through public-private partnerships, privatization, domestic and

international private sector investment, concessional financing from multilateral development institutions, and domestic public spending. The United Nations development system would play a crucial role in building national capacity and facilitating technology transfer, which would support implementation and follow-up.

73. Lastly, a whole chapter of the plan would be dedicated to the mass displacement crisis that had engulfed Lebanon and its economy in recent years. Addressing the crisis was a challenge that could not be met by Lebanon alone but rather would require a collective international effort to provide short-term humanitarian assistance and longer-term development financing on concessional terms. Failure to take such action would no doubt hinder the proper implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the national sustainable development plan in the years to come.

74. **Ms. Arrieta Munguia** (Observer for Mexico) said that the United Nations needed to address its own internal resistance to breaking down silos that prevented it from acting as one organization. With two months to go until the high-level political forum on sustainable development, the integration segment was an opportunity to bring the discussions from various processes together, in particular regarding the functions of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. The themes of innovation and integration were highly relevant and should guide thinking within the United Nations.

75. As the coordinating body of the United Nations system and development activities, the Council should ensure that country and regional offices worked in coordination and human and financial resources were not spread too thinly, in order to obtain the best results and maximize the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Given the Council's wide experience in the implementation of large-scale strategies, sharing the most successful practices in designing methodological tools would be very useful for less developed countries. The Council could also play a role in facilitating triangular cooperation.

76. **Mr. Fathalla** (Observer for the League of Arab States) said that countries must work together to achieve prosperity for their peoples. The League of Arab States had established a programme for implementation of the 2030 Agenda, in collaboration with Egypt and the United Nations development bodies, and had highlighted key challenges that would impinge on implementation of the Agenda.

77. With regard to the eradication of poverty, all resources must be mobilized to ensure that no one was left behind, on the basis of universal principles of international cooperation such as common but differentiated responsibilities and respect for specific national characteristics. An integrated methodology must be adopted that covered the three dimensions of sustainable development.

78. The world today, especially the Arab world, was facing political and security challenges that represented obstacles to implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and must not be neglected. The primary challenge was the occupation of Arab countries by Israel; those nations would need support in order to achieve the Goals. Conflicts constituted a further challenge, which also had an adverse impact on neighbouring countries. Strengthening cooperation was a crucial element of combating terrorism and addressing its root causes.

79. Countries had differing scientific capacities and capacities for science and technology development; greater progress was needed in developing countries and technology transfer should be facilitated. Global partnerships should be strengthened and financial resources mobilized. It was important to help States strengthen their capacity for high-quality, disaggregated statistical production, analysis and reporting, which would enhance decision-making and foster the development of methodologies and mechanisms for data collection, transfer and exchange. The aim was to create new, innovative tools that would allow for greater transparency, thereby transforming the Goals into concrete action. The success of the Agenda depended above all on combating terrorism and saving young people from terrorism and extremism.

80. Lastly, South-South cooperation would be important in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. Each State had to decide on its own priorities in each dimension, on the basis of universal principles and its own specificities.

81. **Mr. Marobe** (South Africa) said that the immediate and central goal of South Africa was to end poverty and hunger and achieve sustainable development in its three dimensions, by promoting inclusive economic growth, protecting the environment

and promoting social inclusion in a drive to move from commitments to results.

82. South Africa had gained a head start in the implementation process, in particular regarding the three challenges of poverty, inequality and unemployment, thanks to its adoption of a national development plan in 2012, which was aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and served as a platform for implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want.

83. National efforts were premised on empowering all stakeholders to contribute to the collective effort. Annual performance plans of implementing government departments had been adjusted to focus on outcomes rather than activities, while national development targets and indicators had been streamlined to improve the quality of reporting. South Africa would also be placing more emphasis on performance monitoring and strengthening participatory democracy through its implementation of a citizen-based monitoring framework, an innovative and integrated approach to monitoring government performance.

84. The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities lay at the heart of the Sustainable Development Goals, highlighting that the Goals were universal but each country's starting point was different. Developed countries must continue to support developing countries in their implementation of the Goals through provision of the necessary means.

85. In order to end poverty within a generation, enable every individual on the planet to live a life of dignity, combat climate change and set the world on a sustainable course, meaningful collaboration on technological solutions was essential. In that regard, South Africa looked forward to the outcomes of the first multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the sustainable development goals, to be held in June 2016, which had been mandated by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the 2030 Agenda to address the potential of science, technology and innovation to achieve the Goals.

86. Developing countries needed support to disaggregate indicators and analyse data. A stronger science-policy link was crucial, as it would help solve problems, integrate the three dimensions of sustainability and establish them within different social practices and production systems. It was also vital to provide concrete support to the Technology Facilitation Mechanism; multi-stakeholder partnerships were an essential element of delivering sustainable development results that were equitable and aligned to national and regional needs.

87. Africa would need support to ensure that no one was left behind and to achieve sustainable development and inclusive economic growth. Integrated implementation, follow-up and review of both the 2030 Agenda and the African Union Agenda 2063 would be required at the regional level. Regional processes and United Nations bodies should support the regions in assessing progress, sharing lessons learned and identifying ways to accelerate implementation while also lessening the reporting burden and duplication.

88. South Africa welcomed the vertical and horizontal integration of women in almost all the Goals. Policy innovation and integration would play a key role in driving progress towards gender equality through stronger legislation, policies and institutions and scaled-up financing for sustainable development initiatives by women.

89. Lastly, the high-level political forum on sustainable development should ensure that Member States received the necessary support to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, and the outcomes of the integration segment should help Member States and international bodies to play their part in the global effort.

The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.